

Trees in winter

In winter when deciduous trees are bare it's more difficult to identify one tree from another. But you can learn how to tell them apart by taking a close look at their buds.

Ash

The pale grey twigs of the ash tree bear black conical buds.

They are set in opposite pairs and the tip of each twig ends in a single flattened bud, which is much larger than the rest.

The ash tree does not open its leaves until late April.



Beech

Beech trees don't always lose all their leaves in winter, so you can usually identify them from the dead rusty-brown foliage still clinging to their branches.

Their slender twigs bear long (2cm), narrow brown buds, which taper to a sharp point.

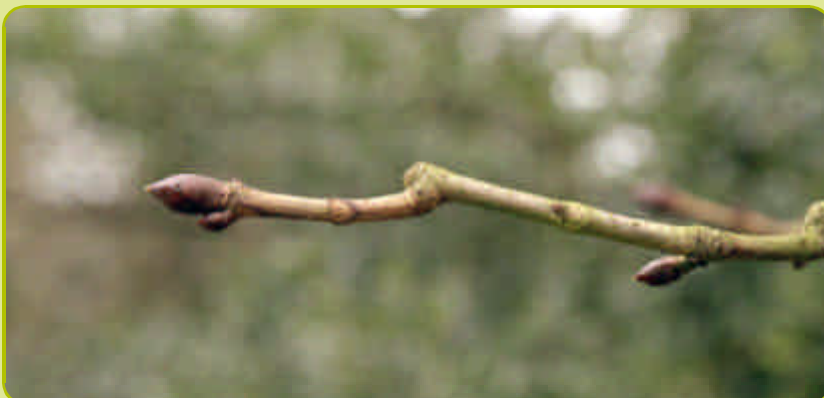


Horse chestnut

The large buds of the horse chestnut tree are easy to identify in March when they feel sticky to the touch.

The buds grow in opposite pairs, apart from those at the twig tips.

The twigs of the horse chestnut are dark brown.



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Lime

In winter all three species of lime can be identified by their shiny red twigs. The twigs are zigzag-shaped and the buds are arranged alternately.

Each bud has two protective scales, one of which is larger than the other.

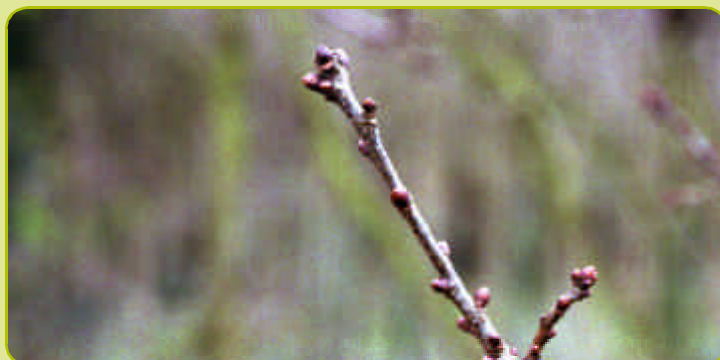


Oak

Oak trees can be identified from the clusters of buds growing towards the tips of each twig.

As the buds are tightly grouped, the leaves are bunched closely together in summer.

The buds of the Turkey oak are surrounded with ragged hairs known as stipules.



Plane

The zigzag twigs of the plane tree bear large, cone-shaped buds.

Another easy way to identify this tree is by looking at its trunk. This is patterned in different shades of cream, green and brown because the plane tree continually sheds its bark.



Sycamore

The bright green buds of the sycamore tree are set in opposite pairs on smooth grey twigs. The buds are hard and remain tightly closed until early April.

Sycamores were introduced to the British Isles from France.

